

# CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

WALTER M. DICKIE, M.D., Director

## Weekly Bulletin



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GUY F. JONES  
EDITOR

## Hearing Impairment is Common

Only about half of the adult population of the nation claims to have normal hearing, according to random samplings made in connection with recent United States Public Health Service surveys.

Findings also revealed that only 56 per cent of these people who think they hear perfectly passed audiometer tests for normal hearing. Many failed to hear the very high and the very low tones.

Wide differences were found among men and women. In general women detect the high tones better but fail to hear sounds in the lower range. Men do well in detecting low tones but frequently show loss of hearing for high pitched sounds.

The investigation was conducted as a phase of the National Health Survey, and in cooperation with prominent ear specialists. Hearing tests and ear, nose and throat examinations were given to about 9,000 persons drawn at random from the population in twelve cities.

The most frequent defect among these persons who erroneously believed their hearing to be normal consists in loss of hearing above the range of sounds most commonly used in human speech, that is, above an audiofrequency level of 3,000 cycles per second.

It was demonstrated through tests with bone conduction vibrators, placed on the mastoid bones, that these losses for high tones are due to primary degeneration of the acoustic nerve. This degeneration re-

sults from infectious processes associated with certain systemic diseases—such as scarlet fever, meningitis, diphtheria, influenza, and the like—as well as from local infections of the middle ear (*otitis media*). The common head cold is a frequent cause of these middle ear infections.

The study of hearing loss among persons having noticeable impairments of hearing for speech reveals many new facts. Loss of hearing due to congestion and lesions of tissue in the middle ear, without accompanying injury to the acoustic nerve, is found to be characteristic of deafness among children of public school age. Practically all deafness among persons over 25 years of age involves some degree of nerve degeneration. This degeneration is more localized among males and rather widely distributed throughout the ear among females.

In terms of hearing loss as measured with the audiometer, females show typically a rather uniform loss of hearing for all tones from about 100 cycles up to 8,000 cycles. Males, on the other hand, show characteristically greater losses than females for tones higher in pitch than 2,000 cycles. Males also show relatively less loss of hearing than females for tones that are lower in pitch than 1,000 cycles.

Knowledge of this consistent difference between males and females with impaired hearing is of considerable importance to the manufacturer of hearing

aids. A much different type of instrument is required in most cases for males and females. In the case of males, hearing aids should typically amplify sounds above 1,000 cycles relatively more than those below this frequency level. For females, hearing aids should amplify sounds in a fairly uniform ratio through the frequency range from 200 to 4,000 cycles. Instruments now available on the market do not take these facts into account, directors of the hearing study said.

### **LIFE EXPECTANCY PLACED AT SIXTY-TWO**

Babies born in 1938 have a 62-year lease on life.

The total "life expectancy at birth" for the United States last year, according to computations based on certain estimated factors by the United States Public Health Service, was 62 years. This figure compares with an expectancy of 60.26 in 1931, and 60.9 as estimated for 1937.

While still somewhat below the biblical promise of "three score and ten," the life expectancy now is almost twice as great as it was 100 years ago. For the 7 years since 1931 a gain in expectancy of 1.74 years is indicated, while a gain of 1.1 years is shown in 1938 over 1937.

The expectation of life at birth "is the average age at death of a hypothetical group of persons each of whom is subject to the same age specific mortality rates throughout his lifetime."

The important factors in the computation of life tables are these age specific death rates, which are based upon the age distribution of the population and on the deaths by ages. Apparently the actual average age at death of persons in the general population should be the life expectancy at birth. This is not likely to be true, however, since the age distribution of the living population will probably not be identical with that of the stationary population which is a function of the computed expectancy.

### **MANY MEETINGS SCHEDULED**

Following is a list of meetings of interest to nurses which will be held in California during the spring and summer.

April 3-6—The annual conference of the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation.—San Francisco.

April 13-15—California Tuberculosis Association.—Santa Cruz.

July or August—Western Branch of the American Public Health Association.—Oakland.

August 14-17—California State Nurses meeting.—San Francisco.

### **VENEREAL DISEASE INSTITUTE FOR NURSES**

An institute on the control of syphilis and gonorrhea will be offered to registered graduate nurses of the State of California during summer session at the University of California in Berkeley, June 26 to July 14, 1939. The Department of Hygiene, through the Division of Nursing Education, will direct its activities.

The institute will be of three weeks' duration, beginning June 26 and ending July 14. It will be held daily, except Saturday, from 10 to 12 and 1 to 3. It is planned for only three weeks in order that nurses employed by health departments may attend without causing inconvenience to their departments.

Mrs. Evangeline H. Morris, Instructor in Nursing, Simmons College, will present the subjects of nursing and social problems in the control of syphilis and gonorrhea in a daily, two-hour class.

Doctor Malcolm H. Merrill, Chief of the Bureau of Venereal Diseases, State Department of Public Health, and members of his staff, will lecture on medical problems in syphilis and gonorrhea.

Mrs. Morris and Doctor Merrill will be assisted by Ruth W. Hay, Assistant Professor of Nursing Education, and Margaret Blee, Instructor in Nursing Education, both of the Division of Nursing Education of the Department of Hygiene. They will conduct group discussions based on the information presented by Mrs. Morris and Doctor Merrill.

Three units of credit will be granted for attendance and satisfactory completion of the work. The fee for the institute is \$17.50. Those who wish to take an additional three units of credit may do so during the summer session program by paying the usual summer session fee of \$35 for a total of six units, instead of the \$17.50 required for attendance at the institute only.

The nation-wide campaign to stamp out syphilis has demanded additional knowledge on the part of those professions closely allied to the practice of medicine and public health. Mrs. Morris has given similar institutes with great success at the University of Syracuse, Western Reserve University, and the University of Minnesota.

### **MATERNITY NURSING DEMONSTRATION**

Four nurses are now assigned to a maternity nursing demonstration in Orange County. Miss McCullagh returned to her district in Northern California February 13th.

### A HEALTH OFFICER DIES

There are men in every line of work who stand out among their colleagues because of unusual traits, special skill, wide knowledge in their general field of activity or arresting personality. Dr. Allen F. Gillihan, retired health officer of San Luis Obispo County, who died February 15th, will be remembered for his particular skill in the diagnosis of smallpox and the technique of vaccination, for his broad knowledge in all public health activities, for his enthusiastic approach to his chosen field of work, for his particular aptitude as a teacher, his buoyant zest for living.

None who really knew him could fail to come under the spell of his magic personality nor could they fail to recognize the great heart-beats for all humanity that pounded out of his rugged frame. Underneath his impulsive manner lay the deepest appreciation of those philosophies and noble ideals that lift men into higher planes of thought and action. An evening before an open fire, with him in reflective mood, was an educational experience never to be forgotten. Many of the older health officers in California have enjoyed this rare privilege that can never come to them again.

Dr. Gillihan served as health officer of Oakland, district health officer for the State Board of Health, and health officer of San Luis Obispo County until his retirement last year. He had been active in public health affairs throughout California for more than twenty-five years. He was a man of broad education, a skilled mathematician, an astronomer of ability who had taught this subject in the university, a faithful and devoted doctor of medicine to a large clientele, and finally, a physician to the masses, laboring to prevent those ills that commonly afflict mankind and to strengthen the social structure for raising human welfare and extending common good to the under-privileged.

It is impossible to measure the benefits that have come through the gifts of this generous public servant. Truly, he gave all that he had to his fellowmen. To health officers, public health nurses, sanitarians and vital statisticians he was always an inspiration and a mentor. To him they owe much, for he taught them more than can be read in books or than can be seen under microscopes. None can learn of his passing without regret nor can they fail to realize that there are none left, of his unusual type, to goad them on toward ideals of perfection in public service.

Life is not mere living, but the enjoyment of health.—Martial.

### PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING CONFERENCES HELD

A series of conferences on prenatal care was completed in February. Following is a summary of the attendance at each conference:

Place	Total	Phn's	Other nurses	Students	Doctors	Lay people
San Jose	66	44	10	6	2	4
Ukiah	17	15	--	--	2	--
Redding	21	12	5	--	2	2
Sacramento	68	48	18	--	1	1
San Francisco	149	112	34	--	--	3
Santa Barbara	51	29	2	15	1	4
San Diego	73	49	13	--	4	7
Los Angeles	97	85	9	2	--	1
Santa Ana	43	42	--	--	1	--
Bakersfield	30	22	6	--	1	1
Fresno	41	37	--	--	--	4
Total	656	495	97	23	14	27

Many favorable comments on the meetings have been received. The afternoon session which provided a departure from set speeches was evidently welcomed by the nurses. Miss Olive Whitlock, Director, Division of Public Health Nursing, Oregon State Department of Public Health, and Miss Harstad, Maternity Nursing Consultant, attended the conference in Redding.

The supervising nurse of the Nevada State Board of Health and one of the field nurses attended the conference in Sacramento.

Work has been started on plans for a series of conferences on infant and preschool care to be started about April 27th.

Know, or hearken to him who knows. Yon can not live without knowledge, either your own, or borrowed, but there be many who do not know that they know nothing, and others who think that they know, but know nothing; such deformities of the mind are incurable, whence it is that the ignorant do not know themselves, thus failing to discover what they lack. Some would be wise, if they did not believe that they were, and so it comes to pass that even though the oracles of wisdom are few, they live in idleness, because none consults them; it does not dwarf grandeur, nor argue against capacity to seek advice, yea, to seek advice brings credit; better to debate in the mind, to avoid combat with misfortune.

—Baltazar Gracian, 1653.

### MORBIDITY

Complete Reports for Following Diseases for Week Ending February 18, 1939

#### Chickenpox

787 cases: Alameda County 23, Alameda 7, Berkeley 16, Hayward 5, Livermore 3, Oakland 11, Piedmont 1, Calaveras County 1, Colusa 1, Contra Costa County 2, Antioch 7, Fresno County 9, Fresno 4, Imperial County 2, Holtville 1, Calipatria 1, Inyo County 6, Kern County 12, Los Angeles County 63, Alhambra 7, Arcadia 3, Beverly Hills 2, Burbank 5, Glendale 11, Glendora 2, Huntington Park 1, Inglewood 4, Long Beach 9, Los Angeles 79, Monrovia 26, Montebello 2, Pasadena 11, San Gabriel 4, San Marino 3, Santa Monica 5, South Pasadena 1.

Whittier 1, Hawthorne 1, South Gate 9, Monterey Park 10, Signal Hill 3, Maywood 1, Bell 2, Madera County 4, Madera 3, Chowchilla 1, Marin County 1, Mariposa County 2, Ukiah 12, Merced County 1, Merced 9, Orange County 9, Anaheim 1, Fullerton 1, Newport Beach 2, Santa Ana 9, Banning 3, Beaumont 2, Corona 7, Sacramento County 10, Sacramento 15, San Bernardino County 19, Redlands 1, San Diego County 20, Chula Vista 1, Oceanside 11, San Diego 30, San Francisco 77, San Joaquin County 30, Lodi 6, Stockton 7, Tracy 13, San Luis Obispo County 1, Arroyo Grande 1, San Mateo County 1, Burlingame 1, Daly City 6, San Mateo 6, Santa Barbara 3, Santa Clara County 6, Mountain View 1, Palo Alto 5, San Jose 12, Santa Cruz County 1, Watsonville 1, Sonoma County 1, Sutter County 1, Tehama County 11, Red Bluff 17, Trinity County 4, Tulare County 8, Porterville 4, Ventura County 1, Fillmore 1, Santa Paula 4, Yolo County 4, Woodland 1, National City 1.

#### Diphtheria

37 cases: Oakland 2, Los Angeles County 2, Glendale 1, Long Beach 1, Los Angeles 6, Pomona 1, Santa Monica 2, Ukiah 2, Sacramento County 1, Sacramento 2, San Bernardino County 4, San Bernardino 1, San Diego County 1, El Cajon 1, San Diego 2, San Francisco 2, Lompoc 1, San Jose 1, Marysville 4.

#### German Measles

35 cases: Alameda 3, Albany 2, Berkeley 3, Oakland 4, San Leandro 1, Inyo County 1, Los Angeles County 1, Burbank 1, Glendale 1, Long Beach 2, Los Angeles 3, South Pasadena 1, Santa Ana 2, Sacramento 1, San Diego 1, San Francisco 4, Redwood City 1, Santa Clara County 2, Palo Alto 1.

#### Influenza

48 cases: Oakland 3, Contra Costa County 1, El Centro 1, Los Angeles County 2, El Monte 1, Glendale 3, Huntington Park 3, Long Beach 1, Los Angeles 18, Pasadena 1, Gardena 1, Madera County 1, Fort Bidwell 1, Sacramento 1, San Bernardino County 5, San Francisco 2, Healdsburg 1, Stanislaus County 1, Corning 1.

#### Measles

2889 cases: Alameda County 109, Alameda 88, Albany 21, Berkeley 138, Hayward 30, Oakland 391, Piedmont 1, Pleasanton 9, San Leandro 44, Calaveras County 1, Contra Costa County 80, Antioch 24, El Cerrito 12, Pinole 1, Pittsburg 51, Richmond 19, Walnut Creek 1, Fresno County 34, Fresno 31, Imperial County 4, Calipatria 1, Kern County 2, Lassen County 23, Los Angeles County 26, Alhambra 1, Avalon 1, Burbank 10, Glendale 9, Inglewood 1, Long Beach 30, Los Angeles 185, Monrovia 2, Montebello 2, Pasadena 1, San Gabriel 1, Santa Monica 1, South Pasadena 1, Torrance 4, South Gate 2, Madera County 12, Chowchilla 4, Marin County 6, Ross 6, San Rafael 1, Ukiah 3, Merced County 1, Salinas 1, Napa County 1, Orange County 33, Santa Ana 2, Tustin 1, San Clemente 5, Riverside County 23, Banning 5, Corona 3, Perris 20, Riverside 36, Sacramento County 13, Sacramento 102, North Sacramento 14, San Bernardino County 62, Ontario 1, San Bernardino 7, Coronado 2, National City 1, San Diego 33, San Francisco 466, San Joaquin County 26, Stockton 27, San Luis Obispo County 11, Paso Robles 2, San Luis Obispo 1, San Mateo County 6, Burlingame 9, Daly City 15, Hillsborough 1, Redwood City 13, San Bruno 1, San Mateo 11, South San Francisco 29, San Carlos 1, Menlo Park 3, Santa Barbara County 8, Lompoc 2, Santa Barbara 3, Santa Clara County 174, Mountain View 1, Palo Alto 7, San Jose 155, Sunnyvale 1, Santa Cruz County 1, Siskiyou County 4, Solano County 2, Benicia 4, Fairfield 1, Suisun 1, Vallejo 27, Sonoma County 43, Petaluma 1, Sonoma 5, Stanislaus County 11, Tehama County 11, Corning 2, Porterville 1, Ventura County 3, Santa Paula 1, Winters 3.

#### Mumps

841 cases: Alameda County 7, Alameda 7, Albany 15, Berkeley 96, Hayward 4, Livermore 2, Oakland 51, Pleasanton 3, San Leandro 5, Piedmont 27, Calaveras County 4, Contra Costa County 11, Antioch 1, El Cerrito 2, Martinez 18, Pittsburg 5, Richmond 8, Walnut Creek 14, Fresno County 3, Fresno 6, Calipatria 1, Kern County 49, Bakersfield 1, Delano 1, Los Angeles County 22, Arcadia 2, Beverly Hills 1, Compton 1, Glendale 9, Long Beach 4, Los Angeles 21, Manhattan 1, Monrovia 3, Pasadena 8, San Marino 1, Santa Monica 2, Lynwood 5, West Covina 1, South Gate 1, Madera County 2, Mariposa County 2, Yosemite National Park 1, Mendocino County 7, Merced County 41, Gustine 2, Merced 24, Napa 1, Santa Ana 1, Placer County 1, Riverside County 2, Beaumont 1, Riverside 13, Sacramento County 3, Sacramento 31, San Bernardino County 16, Redlands 2, San Diego County 14, Oceanside 3, San Diego 11, San Francisco 70, San Joaquin County 23, Lodi 1, Manteca 4, Stockton 10, San Luis Obispo County 7, San Luis Obispo 12, San Mateo County 3, Burlingame 23, Daly City 1, San Bruno 2, San Mateo 2, Santa Barbara 3, Santa Maria 1, Santa Clara County 2, San Jose 1, Santa Cruz County 32, Shasta County 2, Benicia 1, Vacaville 1, Vallejo 8, Stanislaus County 1, Tehama County 1, Red Bluff 1, Trinity County 3, Tulare County 12, Exeter 3, Porterville 2, Visalia 2, Ventura County 1, Yolo County 4, Woodland 1.

#### Pneumonia (Lobar)

83 cases: Oakland 1, Calaveras County 1, Los Angeles County 8, Arcadia 1, Alhambra 1, Glendale 1, Los Angeles 37, Pomona

1, Santa Monica 1, Whittier 1, Fort Bidwell 4, Orange 1, Riverside 1, Sacramento County 1, Sacramento 2, San Diego 3, San Francisco 12, Lodi 1, San Mateo 1, Lindsay 1, Yolo County 1, Long Beach 2.

#### Scarlet Fever

247 cases: Berkeley 1, Oakland 4, San Leandro 1, Gilroy 1, Richmond 1, Fresno County 11, Fresno 1, Calexico 1, Kern County 4, Lake County 1, Los Angeles County 21, Alhambra 4, Burbank 3, Compton 2, Culver City 1, Glendale 7, Hermosa 1, Long Beach 7, Los Angeles 75, Monrovia 1, Montebello 1, Pasadena 3, Pomona 1, San Fernando 1, San Gabriel 1, Santa Monica 1, Torrance 2, Lynwood 1, South Gate 1, Bell 2, Chowchilla 1, Mendocino County 1, Merced County 1, Orange County 3, Orange 2, Santa Ana 1, Placer County 1, Riverside County 4, Corona 5, Elsinore 2, Sacramento County 2, Sacramento 1, San Bernardino County 4, San Bernardino 4, San Diego 5, San Francisco 17, San Joaquin County 4, Stockton 1, San Luis Obispo County 1, Santa Barbara County 2, Santa Clara County 3, San Jose 2, Santa Cruz County 1, Sonoma County 6, Stanislaus County 1, Turlock 1, Yuba City 1, Tehama County 3, Tulare County 3, Porterville 2.

#### Smallpox

22 cases: Fresno County 1, Kern County 1, Los Angeles County 1, Long Beach 1, Los Angeles 1, Sacramento 2, Redwood City 4, Tulare County 7, Marysville 1, California 3.\*

#### Typhoid Fever

1 case: Fresno County.

#### Whooping Cough

119 cases: Berkeley 1, Lassen County 5, Los Angeles County 6, Alhambra 1, El Monte 2, Glendale 2, Long Beach 7, Los Angeles 35, Pasadena 1, Santa Monica 1, Hawthorne 1, Mendocino County 4, King City 1, Orange 2, Santa Ana 4, Corona 1, Sacramento County 1, San Bernardino 3, San Diego 12, San Francisco 11, Daly City 1, San Mateo 1, Santa Barbara County 2, Santa Barbara 1, San Jose 2, Sonoma County 5, Stanislaus County 1, Santa Paula 4, Ventura 1.

#### Meningitis (Epidemic)

3 cases: Los Angeles 2, Stanislaus County 1.

#### Dysentery (Amoebic)

10 cases: Calipatria 1, Los Angeles 2, Orange County 1, Riverside 1, Sacramento 1, San Bernardino County 3, Paso Robles 1.

#### Dysentery (Bacillary)

2 cases: Los Angeles.

#### Poliomyelitis

2 cases: Los Angeles.

#### Trachoma

6 cases: Fresno County 2, Los Angeles 1, San Bernardino County 1, San Francisco 1, San Mateo 1.

#### Paratyphoid Fever

2 cases: Los Angeles County 1, California 1.\*

#### Trichinosis

1 case: San Francisco.

#### Jaundice (Epidemic)

1 case: Santa Clara County.

#### Food Poisoning

2 cases: San Francisco 1, San Luis Obispo County 1.

#### Undulant Fever

7 cases: Alameda County 2, Perris 1, San Bernardino County 1, San Francisco 1, Santa Barbara County 1, Sonoma County 1.

#### Coccidioidal Granuloma

2 cases: Kern County.

#### Septic Sore Throat

2 cases: Pasadena 1, Solano County 1.

#### Rabies (Animal)

23 cases: Fresno 1, Kern County 5, Los Angeles County 3, Azusa 1, Burbank 1, Los Angeles 8, San Joaquin County 1, San Luis Obispo County 1, San Luis Obispo 2.

\* Cases charged to "California" represent patients ill before entering the state or those who contracted their illness traveling about the state throughout the incubation period of the disease. These cases are not chargeable to any one locality.